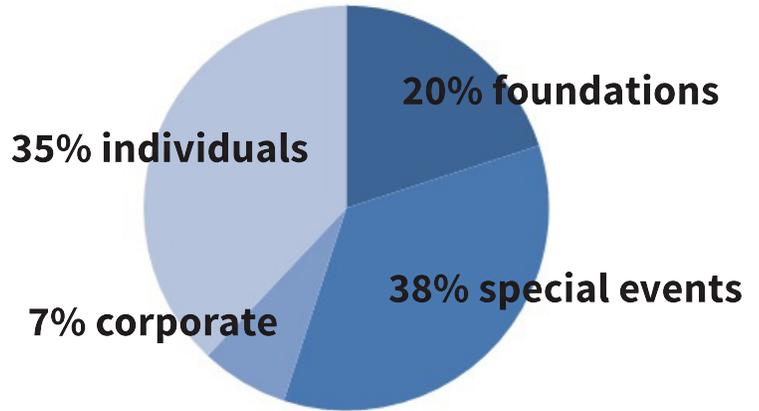


*Measuring our impact*  
**2014 Annual Report**

2013 Revenue: \$2,273,556

**2014 Revenue:  
\$2,306,205**

WPC revenue comes from:



35 Total events hosted by WPC

Total event attendance

**4,579**

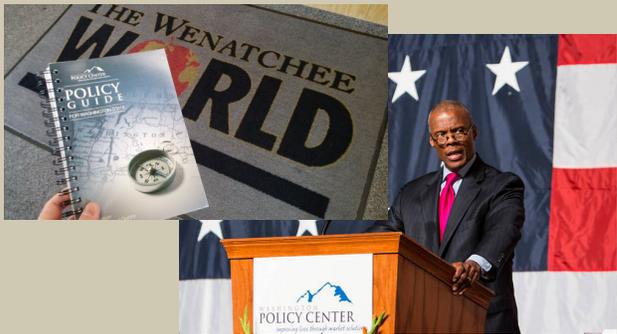
WPC appeared in the media  
an average of

**5** times per day

Visitors to the WPC website

**204,022**

# East of the CASCADDES



In 2014, WPC celebrated the fifth anniversary of our Eastern Washington office with impressive achievements, continued growth, substantial name

recognition and events that continue to be the envy of organizations around the country.

No other public policy or research organization has an Eastern Washington media presence like Washington Policy Center. In 2014, we were featured more than 350 times throughout Eastern Washington!

During the 2014 legislative session, we held eight legislative 'Wake-Up Forums' which drew more than 300 attendees in total. These forums connect legislators via video conference to locations across Eastern Washington, where citizens gather to get updates on the latest happenings at the state capitol.

Thanks to the success of WPC's Wake-Up Forums, legislators in 2014 pushed forward with our recommendations to begin legislative remote video testimony. In November, for the first time in state history, a State Senate committee took video testimony from a remote video location – Spokane Community College – as WPC's Jason Mercier testified by invitation on a proposal to change the way state Supreme Court justices are elected.

In April, 200 people packed the Wolff Auditorium at Gonzaga University to hear experts debate whether Washington state should raise the minimum wage. Attendees, including many college students, were able to text-in questions to panelists including legislators, economist Steve Moore of The Heritage Foundation and Sarah Jane Glynn of the Center for American Progress.

In June 2014, we were delighted to introduce Eastern Washington to its first public charter school – PRIDE Prep in Spokane. At a breakfast event, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Spokane Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger, CEO & Founder of PRIDE Prep Brenda McDonald and Dan Nicklay, principal of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy addressed the attendees.

Finally, the autumn of 2014 featured our Annual Dinner. For the first time ever we held a standalone dinner event in Eastern Washington – and WPC supporters and the community responded! More than 650 people welcomed former Oklahoma Congressman J.C. Watts and *Forbes* columnist and author Amity Shlaes to the Spokane Convention Center for one of the largest yearly events in Eastern Washington. WPC's Eastern Washington Annual Dinner continues to grow in size and stature. As Congressman Watts explained, "Good public policy is tough. And it's expensive. Someone has to think through these issues. And so I appreciate the Washington Policy Center... an organization that still gives serious thought to how to move the state of Washington forward."

## Environment

In 2014, the Environmental Center focused its analysis on refuting the many environmental myths that have come to dominate policy debates.

Notably, when Governor Inslee announced his environmental policies in December, Environmental Director Todd Myers provided analysis of the costs of the proposal. The Governor said he modeled his proposal on the "successful" carbon-reduction policy in the Northeast United States, called RGGI. Todd pointed out, however, that RGGI made no difference in carbon reduction – something the RGGI board admitted. Our research also pointed out that although the Governor claims his low-carbon fuel policy would reduce air pollution, the Department of Ecology says it will cut pollution by ½ of one percent, ten years from now.

We continued to draw national attention for our work, publishing more than a dozen articles in *The Wall Street Journal*. Todd was also interviewed by CNN, *The Wall Street Journal* and CBS "This Morning" regarding Seattle's new mandatory composting law.

While much of our work used data to show the failure of the left-wing approach to environmental policy, on Earth Day 2014, we showed there is a better way to help the environment. Todd's "Real environmentalists are conservative. And live where it's green," noted that many of the most effective environmental solutions originated in the free market, not political policy.



## Small Business

In 2014, amid the growing movement to increase the minimum wage to \$15, the Center for Small Business worked to dispel many of the common myths about the minimum wage and who earns it. WPC published research publications and editorials, and traveled around the state to speak to local chambers of commerce and civic organizations to educate policymakers and citizens on the facts about minimum wage earners and the tradeoffs of an artificially high mandated minimum wage.

The Center for Small Business also hosted two debates on the minimum wage issue in 2014 with WPC's Young Professionals. Hundreds of business owners, students and engaged citizens gathered at the University of Washington and Gonzaga University to learn more about the arguments for and against increasing the minimum wage and the impact it would have on students.

Small Business Director Erin Shannon traveled around the state for WPC's Biennial Small Business Forums, where hundreds gathered to hear about ways to improve the business climate.

As part of the Center's increasing focus on labor reform, a series of research studies on right-to-work policies and the impact they are having in other states were released, with a follow-up on the economic impact a right-to-work law would have in Washington planned for 2015.

# Education

In 2014, the Center for Education's Liv Finne, as part of WPC's Charter School Follow-up Project, introduced leaders of Washington's new charter schools over breakfast at Seattle's Town Hall. The goal of this WPC project is to ensure the success of charter schools and their expansion in our state. The Center also published "Opening New Doors for Students: Washington's First Public Charter Schools," and reported about the next round of charter schools.

In January, the state Supreme Court directed the legislature to appropriate funds for certain education funding line items or be held in contempt. The Center criticized that decision as interfering with the constitutional authority of the legislature to fund education. In September, the Supreme Court held the legislature in contempt, raising additional questions about the separation of powers doctrine. The Center continued to offer solutions to the quagmire the *McCleary* decision means to the state legislature and education reform.

Over the summer, the state teachers union, the Washington Education Association, filed Initiative 1351, the class size reduction initiative with no funding source. While this initiative had no organized opposition, the Center provided extensive research and commentary showing that class size reduction policies are very expensive and do not bring significant learning improvements to students. The initiative passed narrowly, but not by huge margins, as anticipated.

Finally, Liv was honored by *SeattleMet Magazine* as a "Game Changer," one of the 15 people who should run Seattle!



# Government Reform

We continued our work to bring a supermajority for taxes protection to the local level. In June we published a primer for local government officials on how to implement a supermajority for taxes requirement like Spokane, Yakima and Pierce County have done. We met with several local government officials about bringing this popular taxpayer protection to their jurisdictions. We also had an op-ed published in *The Seattle Times*, *Walla Walla Union Bulletin* and *Tri-City Herald* on the need for supermajority protections at the local level.

WPC launched a pension reform project including a study by respected former State Auditor Hon. Brian Sonntag, as well as a video, which reviews the current pension system in Seattle and provides recommendations for reform that would benefit current city employees, future employees and Seattle taxpayers. The project gained momentum through the media, resulting in several radio interviews, an editorial board meeting and study endorsement by *The Seattle Times* and an op-ed by Brian Sonntag.

Also, *The Seattle Times* requested an op-ed from us on the need to end the secret contract negotiations between state unions and the Governor. Since then they have run their own editorial calling for the end of secret negotiations. Other newspapers then ran editorials based on our calls for open negotiations including: *The Olympian*, *Vancouver Columbian*, *The Spokesman-Review*, *Bellingham Herald* and *Tri-City Herald*.

# Health Care

Last year marked the beginning of the implementation of many of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) benefits. Health care policy analyst, Roger Stark, M.D., spoke to groups around the state and was invited a total of three times by three different members of Congress to testify on Capitol Hill regarding various aspects of the ACA.

WPC health care editorials were published in *Forbes*, *The Seattle Times*, *the Puget Sound Business Journal* and other regional news outlets. The Center also contributed to national and regional news broadcasts dealing with implementation of the ACA.

WPC's 12th Annual Health Care Conference held in May focused on the impact of the ACA. Over 500 attendees in Bellevue and Spokane heard Katie Mahoney, the Executive Director of Health Care Policy with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, discuss the law's impact on businesses. The 13th Annual Health Care Conference will be held in July 2015 and will focus on health care solutions.

# Transportation

In 2014, WPC's Coles Center for Transportation spent much of the year providing research and data to the public, the press and elected officials on King County Metro Transit. Local elected officials chose to place two tax increases for Metro on the April ballot, totaling \$1.5 billion over ten years, to prevent a 17 percent cut in bus service. The Center's research showed Metro could preserve bus service without raising regressive taxes, as county leaders were receiving a huge sales tax windfall, more than half of what they needed. We also recommended county leaders open a dialogue with transit unions, who previously rejected a generous contract offer and donated heavily to the pro-tax campaign.

After voters rejected the tax increases, county officials planned to follow through on their threats to cut neighborhood bus service, despite the rosy revenue picture. WPC was heavily involved in stopping the bulk of those bus cuts, and in the end, the King County Council chose to preserve 95 percent of bus service in King County by better managing rising revenues at current tax rates.